

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 DHA-02 BIB-01 /074 W
-----011721Z 024036 /50

R 011506Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1920
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, AU, CZ
SUBJ: 28TH SUDETEN-GERMAN CONGRESS IN VIENNA AND ITS AFTERMATH

REF: PRAGUE 1029

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: SUDETEN-GERMAN RALLY VIENNA, MAY 28-30,
WAS TAME AFFAIR, DEVOID OF POLITICAL PYROTECHNICS. SPEECH-MAKING
WAS CIRCUMSPECT AND PARTICIPANTS, MOSTLY FROM FRG, WERE IN
SENIOR CITIZEN CATEGORY. CHANCELLOR SAIS CONGRESS WENT AS HE
HAD EXPECTED. ASKED ABOUT ITS IMPACT ON AUSTRIAN-CSSR
RELATIONS, HE RESPONDED THAT CSSR LIKE POLAND AND HUNGARY COULD
HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH AUSTRIA AND THAT AUSTRIA WOULD WELCOME
EARLY VISIT BY PRIME MINISTER STROUGAL. END SUMMARY.

2. TWENTY-EIGHTH SUDETEN-GERMAN CONGRESS WAS HELD IN VIENNA,
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MAY 28-30, 1977. ABOUT 50 THOUSAND SUDETEN-GERMAN
ZPELLEES, MOSTLY FROM FRG, TOOK PART IN VARIED PROGRAM
OF MEETINGS, EXHIBITS, FOLK DANCING, CHURCH SERVICES AND
OPEN-AIR RALLIES, GOA AUTHORITIES HAD MADE CLEAR TO
CONGRESS ORGANIZERS THAT CONGRESS WAS NOT TO BE MISUSED
TO DEMONSTRATE AGAINST CSSR, BUT, AS PROJECTED, TO BE
OCCASION FOR EXPELLEES TO GET TOGETHER TO REAFFIRM AND

MAINTAIN THEIR COMMON CULTURAL-HISTORICAL HERITAGE.

3. SUDETEN-GERMAN LEADERS INCLUDING WALTER BECHER WERE ACCORDINGLY CIRCUMSPECT IN THEIR SPEECHES, UNDERLINING PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION AS INALIENABLE PART OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ABSENCE OF ANY DESIRE TO REVISE

CURRENT BORDERS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF CREATING PARTNERSHIP OF FREE NATIONS AND ETHNIC GROUPS IN FREE EUROPE. AUSTRIAN MEDIA COVERAGE OF EVENTS, INCLUDING BRIEF INTERVIEWS WITH MANY PARTICIPANTS, STRESSED NON-POLEMICAL NATURE OF CONGRESS, WITH OPPORTUNITY IT OFFERED FOR MOSTLY SENIOR CITIZENS IN ATTENDANCE TO RENEW OLD FRIENDSHIPS AND ENGAGE IN BIT OF NOSTALGIA OVER PAST. RADIO AND TV TEAMS FROM EE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES WERE ON HAND BUT APPEARED HARD PUT TO COME UP WITH PHOTOS AND DIALOGUE TO SUPPORT EARLIER COMMUNIST CHARGES THAT CONGRESS WAS "GATHERING OF FASCISTS AND REVANCHISTS" AND SHOULD HAVE BEEN FORBIDDEN BY GOA. ALL EVENTS TOOK PLACE WITHOUT INCIDENT.

4. GIVEN KNOWN SENSIBILITIES OF EE COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS, KEY SENIOR MEMBERS OF AUSTRIA'S SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT ARRANGED TO BE ABSENT FROM VIENNA DURING CONGRESS. GOA WAS REPRESENTED AT CLOSING RALLY BY EDUCATION MINISTER SINOWATZ WHO STRESSED THE POSITIVE; NAMELY PEACE HAS PREVAILED IN EUROPE FOR OVER 30 YEARS AND CONGRESS WAS TAKING PLACE IN ATMOSPHERE FREE OF REVANCHISM AND ETHNIC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HATRED. WEST GERMAN AGRICULTURE MINISTER EITL REPRESENTED FRG GOVERNMENT.

5. CHANCELLOR KREISKY, WHO RETURNED TO VIENNA FROM VACATION ABROAD DAY AFTER CONGRESS ENDED, INDICATED TO CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNALISTS ON MAY 31 THAT CSSR COULD HAVE SAME GOOD RELATIONS WITH AUSTRIA AS DOES POLAND AND HUNGARY AND ADDED THAT AUSTRIA WOULD WELCOME EARLY VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER STROUGAL TO DISCUSS PENDING ISSUES.

6. COMMENT. STROUGAL VISIT HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR SPRING 1977 BUT WAS POSTPONED IN WAKE OF KREISKY OFFER OF ASYLUM TO SINGERS OF CHARTER 77. GOA IS OBVIOUSLY RELIEVED THAT CONGRESS TOOK PLACE WITHOUT INCIDENT OR BEING MISUSED FOR POLITICAL ATTACKS AGAINST CSSR. CURRENT GOA HOPE AND EXPECTATION IS THAT CSSR WILL ACCEPT RENEWED INVITATION TO STROUGAL AND WILL AGREE TO VISIT BEFORE END OF YEAR.MEEHAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, MEETINGS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977VIENNA04453
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770195-0273
Format: TEL
From: VIENNA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197706100/aaaadjwo.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c1ce0773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 PRAGUE 1029
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1996243
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: 28TH SUDETEN-GERMAN CONGRESS IN VIENNA AND ITS AFTERMATH
TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, AU, CZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c1ce0773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009